Comment on the Howy Jacobs' Editorial "Yes we can, but do we?"

Howy Jacobs' recent Editorial on the decline, actual and potential, of US academia as the chief recruiter and trainer of scientists worldwide was right on target [1]. I raise here an additional aspect of a complex situation.

For many years, China has been allowing very smart students and postdoctoral graduates to go to the USA and other western countries for advanced training in biomedical science. Traditionally, very few of those trainees had returned to China and, as a result, the countries providing the training benefited from their accomplishments. The situation, however, has now changed dramatically. The same number, if not more, trainees receive training outside China, but China is now offering them incentives to return after their training is complete. As a result, the National Institutes of Health and similar funding agencies in other countries are paying for the training of China's growing population of biomedical

scientists. Shouldn't China pay for this training? If they do not want to train their own scientists at home or do not feel competent to do so, why don't they pay the trainees' stipends and support the host laboratories? Portugal, a country the economy of which is struggling, supports its biomedical graduate students who train elsewhere. China should do the same.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

REFERENCE

1. Jacobs H (2013) Yes we can, but do we? *EMBO Rep* **14**: 847

Abraham L. Sonenshein is at Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

E-mail: linc.sonenshein@tufts.edu

EMBO reports (2013) **14**, 1027; published online
8 November 2013; doi:10.1038/embor.2013.176